

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-10 and 20-30 are pending, with Claims 1, 3 and 8-10 amended, Claims 11-19 cancelled and Claims 20-30 added by the present amendment.

In the Official Action, the title was objected to; Claims 1-6, 8, 10-11, 14-15 and 17-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Grooters (U.S. Patent No. 6,389,487) in view of McDougall et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,999,966, hereinafter McDougall); and Claims 7, 9, 12, 13 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Grooters and McDougall in view of Golden et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,272,127, hereinafter Golden).

The title is amended as requested in the Official Action.

Claim 1 is amended to more clearly describe and distinctly claim Applicants' invention. Claim 3 is amended to maintain antecedent basis. New Claims 20-30 are directed to a method and system corresponding to the apparatus recited in Claims 1-10. Support for these amended/new claims is found in Applicants' originally filed specification.¹ No new matter is added.

Applicants request acknowledgement of the IDS filed on January 7, 2003.

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the personal interview between the Examiner, the Examiner's supervisor, and Applicants' representatives on March 23, 2006. During the interview possible clarify amendments were discussed. The Examiner has indicated that amending the claims to recite that multiple application object types are translated to a common interface object type may distinguish over the applied references, but that further search and consideration will be required.

¹ Specification, page 10, line 17 – page 14, line 19.

Briefly recapitulating, Claim 1 is directed to a video conference network platform for managing at least two video conference network devices each having unique operational attributes. The video conference network platform includes a video conference network interface module operable to interface with the at least two video conference network devices and to represent of the at least two video conference network devices as corresponding interface objects. The video conference network platform also includes an adapter engine associated with the video conference network interface module and operable to create a corresponding application object for each of the at least two video conference network devices. Each application object corresponds to a respective interface object and has a common format. Each application object includes operational attributes obtained via an interrogation of the respective video conference device by the adaptor engine. The video conference network platform includes one or more management applications operable to manage the at least two video conference network devices via their respective application and interface objects.

Grooters describes a method and apparatus for allowing several applications to share a single video overlay resource via multiplexing. The multiplexing is accomplished from the application end through a multiplexing abstraction layer provided to developers of end applications as an application program interface. Through the application program interface, each application may, at any time request, release or modify the attributes of the video overlay device, such as picture quality, tuning source, etc. The application program interface provides basic functionality of the hardware accessible through other means including normal operating system support and device driver services.²

In particular, Grooters describes an integrated television and personal computer convergence device (e.g., a personal computer or television). As shown in Figure 2, the

² Grooters, Abstract.

convergence device 200, also referred to as a PC-TV, comprises a personal computer 210 as a central control device. Video information is displayed on a display device 212 which is preferably a high resolution (VGA or greater) computer type cathode ray tube (CRT) monitor. The personal computer 210 receives one or more input signals from one or more input sources such as input sources 216, 218 and 220. Likewise, the personal computer provides one or more output signals to one or more output devices such as output devices 222, 224 and 226.³

Grooters further describes a video multiplexer comprising two parts: the video server (video multiplexer) and the video client (client application). As a stand alone application the video server is implemented as an out of process component object model (COM) server. The video client, which is used by any application wishing to display video, is implemented as an in process component object model (COM) server or dynamic link library (DLL). A component object model (COM) is a specification for building software components that can be assembled into programs or add functionality to existing programs running on an operating system capable of displaying windows. Component object model components can be written in a variety of programming languages, typically C++, and can be unplugged from a program at run time without having to recompile the program. Component object model is a foundation of the object linking and embedding (OLE) specification. Object linking and embedding refers to the transferring and sharing of information, or objects, among multiple applications.⁴

In Grooters, a *single* overlay device 258 is shared and controlled by multiple client applications.⁵ However, Grooters does not disclose or suggest Applicants' claimed adapter engine. In particular, Grooters does not disclose or suggest an adapter engine associated with a video conference network interface module and operable to create a corresponding

³ Grooters, column x, lines xx.

⁴ Grooters, column 6, lines 34-52.

⁵ Grooters, column 5, lines 13-52.

application object for each of the *at least two* video conference network devices where a) each application object corresponds to a respective interface object and has *a common format* and b) each application object includes operational attributes obtained *via an interrogation* of the respective video conference device *by the adaptor engine*.

Grooters also discloses an input/output system 116 including controller and adapters for interfacing with various devices.⁶ However, the adapters of system 116 are conventional interface and devices for computer peripherals and do not perform the functions recited in Applicants' independent claims.

McDougall describes a system and method for allowing a video conference participant to establish and direct a video conference through a controlled network separate from the conference network that sustains the conference. A video conference switching system host machine responds to control signals conveyed by a control network to the switching system from a participant accessible control system. The host machine generates adapter conference signals that are interpreted to appropriately configure a cross-point switch in a correspondence with the control signals. The switching system may operate in continuous presence or video follows audio modes.⁷ However, like Grooters, McDougall does not disclose or suggest Applicants' claimed adapter engine.

MPEP §706.02(j) notes that to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, three basic criteria must be met. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine reference teachings. Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. Finally, the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. Also, the teaching or suggestion to make the claimed combination and the reasonable expectation of success must both be found

⁶ Grooters, column 3, line 46 – column 4, line 13.

⁷ McDougall, Abstract.

in the prior art and not based on applicant's disclosure. *In re Vaeck*, 947 F.2d 488, 20 USPQ2d 1438 (Fed. Cir. 1991). Without addressing the first two prongs of the test of obviousness, Applicants submit that the Official Action does not present a *prima facie* case of obviousness because Grooters and McDougall fail to disclose *all* the features of Applicants' claimed invention.

Golden does not cure the deficiencies of Grooters and McDougall. Golden describes a method and device for broadband multimedia communication over a standard circuit switched, public switched telephone network infrastructure (PSTN), and other physical or virtual circuit switched infrastructures, while simultaneously interoperating with the public Internet packet switch infrastructure so as to merge the capabilities of the two types of infrastructures into a seamless capability.⁸ As one embodiment, Golden describes a broadband network topology and interactions that result in an on-demand circuit-switch connection of variable bandwidth between two broadband network users engaged in a videoconference.⁹ However, like Grooters, Golden fails to disclose or suggest the device or method recited in Applicants' independent claims.

As none of the cited prior art, individually or in combination, disclose or suggest all the elements of independent Claims 1 and 19, Applicants submit the inventions defined by Claims 1 and 19, and all claims depending therefrom, are not rendered obvious by the asserted references for at least the reasons stated above.¹⁰

Accordingly, in view of the present amendment and in light of the previous discussion, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is in condition for allowance and respectfully request an early and favorable action to that effect.

⁸ Golden, Abstract.

⁹ Golden, Figure 49, column 54, line 26 – column 55, line 26.

¹⁰ MPEP § 2142 "...the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest *all* the claim limitations. The teaching or suggestion to make the claimed combination and the reasonable expectation of success must both be found in the prior art, and not based on applicant's disclosure. *In re Vaeck*, 947 F.2d 488, 20 USPQ2d 1438 (Fed. Cir. 1991)."

Accordingly, in view of the present amendment and in light of the previous discussion, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is in condition for allowance and respectfully request an early and favorable action to that effect.

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